

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE  
HELEN DIANE FOSTER

**HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 8, 2013*

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, since Dr. Carter G. Woodson first initiated the idea of Black History Month in 1926, Americans have celebrated the contributions of African-Americans to our country's great history. Their contributions know no boundaries and can be felt in literature, arts, sciences, politics and every other facet of American life.

As the Representative of the Fifteenth Congressional District of New York, I have had the opportunity and pleasure to know and work with New York City Councilmember Helen Diane Foster.

Standing on the shoulders of the brave African American women who fought so hard for their rights, Councilmember Foster is a beacon of inspiration and role model for women of all races. She was born in the Bronx and is the second child of educator Helen Foster and former Councilmember Pastor Wendell Foster. At a very young age she was taught the importance of hard work, civility and public service.

Before running for office, Councilmember Foster attended and graduated from Howard University and the CUNY School of Law. She worked as the Assistant District Attorney in the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, served as Assistant Vice President for Legal Affairs at St. Barnabas Hospital. She also happens to be a proud member of the nation's oldest Black sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. In November 2001, Councilmember Foster was the first African-American woman elected to the New York City Council from Bronx County. Throughout her tenure as a member of the New York City Council, she has become well-known for her strong work ethic, no nonsense stances on local issues and robust legislative agenda.

It is leaders like Councilmember Foster who are today's inspiration for future generations of African American women. We honor her, along with all of the courageous African American women, past and present, for their courage and tenacity to help create better communities and a better nation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me in remembering the many strong African American women who have shown us what equality is and how as Americans we all must come together to fight for equality of all races and genders. Today we honor a woman who stands amongst them. Join me in paying tribute to New York City Councilmember Helen Diane Foster and the great African American women who have come before and currently stand beside her.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER OF THE CURRENCY

**HON. SPENCER BACHUS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 8, 2013*

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 150th anniversary of the Of-

fice of the Comptroller of the Currency. The OCC is the oldest regulatory agency in the federal government.

President Abraham Lincoln signed into law the National Currency Act on February 25, 1863. The National Currency Act created a new system of locally owned, federally-chartered and -supervised financial institutions and a new position in the Treasury Department, the Comptroller of the Currency, to oversee their safety and soundness.

The National Currency Act became law during the Civil War, which by 1863 had already proven far more costly in blood and treasure than anyone had imagined at the war's outset. Because the act required newly chartered banks to purchase U.S. government bonds to secure their obligations, it brought millions of dollars to the Treasury, helping to ensure that the troops and those who furnished their food and equipment would not go unpaid.

But for Lincoln, Treasury Secretary Salmon P. Chase, and their allies in Congress, the system ushered in by the National Currency Act was also the fulfillment of a dream to truly unite the country into a vast national market in which a reliable money supply flowed freely from state to state and region to region, stimulating commerce, communication, and a sense of mutual engagement in the enterprise of growth and prosperity for all.

For the past 150 years, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency has aided in advancing the great American enterprise. Over that long period, national bank examiners and those who support their work have exemplified professionalism and integrity.

With skill, steadiness, and good judgment, the men and women of the OCC have helped steer the nation's banking system through crisis. During the Great Depression, OCC examiners worked day and night to reorganize banks and reopen them to the public. The banking system went on to play a major part in financing the American war effort between 1941 and 1945, and the rebuilding of the war-torn world thereafter. During the financial crisis of 2008 and 2009, the OCC helped shore up the banking system and its recovery, so that banks could resume the vital functions they perform in support of America's businesses and communities.

Since 2011, the OCC has also been responsible for the supervision of federal savings associations, whose support of housing finance has made it possible for millions of Americans to enjoy the benefits of home ownership.

Now, whereas Congress approved, and President Abraham Lincoln signed, the National Currency Act of 1863, creating the federal banking system and the position of Comptroller of the Currency; and whereas the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency has served the people of the United States with distinction, ensuring a safe and sound national banking system to support American business, consumers, and communities, Congress hereby congratulates the OCC on its 150th anniversary and wishes it continued success in the accomplishment of its important mission.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA DISTRICT ATTORNEY ESTABLISHMENT ACT OF 2013

**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 8, 2013*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I reintroduce a bill, the District of Columbia District Attorney Establishment Act of 2013, to give District of Columbia residents another element of the self-government enjoyed by all other American citizens. The bill would establish the Office of the District Attorney for the District of Columbia, headed by a district attorney elected by D.C. residents, to prosecute major local criminal laws of the District. Under the Home Rule Act, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, a federal entity, is responsible for prosecuting major local crimes here. The bill effectuates a 2002 advisory referendum, approved by 82 percent of D.C. voters, to create an office of the district attorney, headed by a locally elected district attorney.

There is no law enforcement issue of greater importance to D.C. residents, or on which they have less say, than the prosecution of local crimes here. A U.S. attorney has no business prosecuting the local criminal laws of a jurisdiction, an anachronism that is out of place in 21st century, home-rule D.C. The goal of the legislation is to put the District on par with every other local jurisdiction on local criminal law matters. Under the bill, the locally elected district attorney would become the city's chief legal officer. The U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia would continue to handle federal matters, like the other U.S. attorneys in our country. As presently constituted, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia is the largest in the country, only because it serves as the local city prosecutor. The U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia needs to be freed up to handle national security and other vital federal cases, particularly in the post-9/11 nation's capital.

Amending the Home Rule Act to create a local district attorney would be an important step toward our goal of achieving true self-government. I urge my colleagues to support this important measure.

INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSION ON AMERICANS LIVING ABROAD ACT

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 8, 2013*

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, our 4-6 million constituents scattered across the world promote our culture and strengthen our nation's global influence as they live and work abroad. For years I have worked to ensure that overseas Americans can fully exercise their rights as U.S. citizens by having their voices heard loud and clear by Congress. Five years ago, I formed the Congressional Americans Abroad Caucus because I wanted to bring awareness and focus to the concerns of those residing abroad. U.S. citizens remain just that, citizens, regardless of